

# NATIONAL EPA-TRIBAL SCIENCE COUNCIL

## Conference Call Summary

Monday, August 15, 2011

2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Saving Time

### **Participants**

#### **Jeff Mears**

Tribal Science Council Tribal Co-Chair  
Oneida Tribe of Indians (Region 5)  
Phone: (920) 869-4555  
E-mail: jmears@oneidanation.org

#### **Ted Coopwood**

Tribal Science Council Agency Co-Chair  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Children's Health Protection and  
Environmental Education  
Phone: (202) 564-2197  
E-mail: coopwood.theodore@epa.gov

#### **Monica Rodia**

Tribal Science Council Executive Secretary  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Research and Development  
Phone: (202) 564-8322  
E-mail: rodia.monica@epa.gov

#### **Ken Bailey**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Science Policy  
Phone: (513) 569-7841  
E-mail: bailey.ken@epa.gov

#### **Felicia Barnett**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 4  
Phone: (404) 562-8659  
E-mail: barnett.felicia@epa.gov

#### **Sirirat (Tia) Chullakorn**

Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts  
Point Rancheria (Region 9)  
Phone: (707) 591-0580, ext. 113  
E-mail: u2sc@yahoo.com

#### **Mike Durglo**

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes of the  
Flathead Reservation (Region 8)  
Phone: (406) (406) 883-2888  
E-mail: miked@cskt.org

#### **Brenda Groskinsky**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 7  
Phone: (913) 551-7188  
E-mail: groskinsky.brenda@epa.gov

#### **David Guest**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
American Indian Environmental Office  
Phone: (202) 566-2872  
E-mail: guest.david@epa.gov

#### **Glynis Hill**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Policy  
Phone: (202) 564-1139  
E-mail: hill.glynis@epa.gov

#### **Stanley Holder**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 7  
Phone: (913) 551-7374  
E-mail: holder.stanley@epa.gov

#### **Lon Kissinger**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 10  
Phone: (206) 553-2115  
E-mail: kissinger.lon@epa.gov

#### **David LaRoche**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Air and Radiation  
Phone: (202) 564-3926  
E-mail: laroche.david@epa.gov

#### **James Leathers**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 6  
Phone: (214) 665-6569  
E-mail: leathers.james@epa.gov

#### **Allison Martin**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Research and Development Intern  
Phone: (202) 564-0845  
E-mail: martin.allison@epa.gov

#### **John Mosley**

Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe (Region 9)  
Phone: (775) 574-0101, ext. 13  
E-mail: jmosley@plpt.nsn.us

#### **Eloise (Ella) Mulford**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 5  
Phone: (312) 353-2022  
E-mail: mulford.eloise@epa.gov

**Katie Renwick**

Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians  
Phone: (828) 497-1832  
E-mail: katerenw@nc-chokeee.com

**Joseph Schubauer-Berigan**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Research and Development  
Phone: (513) 569-7734  
E-mail: schubauer-berigan.joseph@epa.gov

**Kai Tang**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 2  
Phone: (732) 321-4364  
E-mail: tang.kai@epa.gov

**Patti Tyler**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 8  
Phone: (303) 312-6081  
E-mail: tyler.patti@epa.gov

**Contractor Support**

**Kristen LeBaron**

The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc.  
Phone: (301) 670-4990  
E-mail: klebaron@scgcorp.com

**Maria Osvald**

The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc.  
Phone: (301) 670-4990  
E-mail: mariaosvald@scgcorp.com

## **Roll Call/Introductions**

Monica Rodia, Executive Secretary of the National EPA-Tribal Science Council (TSC), welcomed the members to the teleconference and took roll.

## **June Business Meeting and July Teleconference Minutes**

Monica reported that the June face-to-face meeting and July conference call minutes had been reviewed, finalized and distributed to the members. She recommended that those who had not been able to attend either meeting read the minutes, as there is a great deal of information in them. Members who have questions about the minutes can ask them during the conference calls or contact her via e-mail or telephone.

## **Tribal Caucus Reports**

Jeff Mears reported that the Region 5 Regional Tribal Operations Committee (RTOC) was held August 2–3, 2011, in Red Lake, Minnesota. He provided a copy of the June 2011 face-to-face meeting minutes to each of the RTOC members and explained to them that the next step is to develop implementation plans for the National Tribal Science Priorities (TSPs). Ted Coopwood stated that he and Jeff as the TSC Co-chairs need to develop the implementation plans, timelines and framework with the understanding of what the tribes need and any Agency requirements. Ted proposed to visit Jeff in September to accomplish this.

In response to a question from Jeff, Tia Chullakorn stated that she gave a presentation on the TSPs to the Region 9 RTOC meeting, and the questions she received were similar to the ones Jeff heard about next steps. Monica asked Tia what she thought would be the best way to proceed. Tia responded that the best next step would be a conference call or webinar to discuss how to best implement the TSPs, which are multimedia. Monica asked whether the Region 9 RTOC commented on climate change. Tia replied that the Region 9 Regional Air Group and one of its water workgroups are working on climate change. Clay Bravo is interested in joining the workgroup, and Monica said that guests always are welcome to participate. Monica asked whether the main points that the tribes identified in the climate change TSP are aligned with the issues that Region 9 is addressing. Tia responded that the workgroup has been trying to determine how to best address the issue in a multimedia manner because currently there is no funding. Ted thanked Tia for her efforts.

Katie Renwick shared that she will be presenting on the TSPs at the Region 4 RTOC meeting later in the week. She noted that the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) has a climate change steering committee comprised of tribal representatives from all of the regions. This is another group that the TSC could work with to develop climate change implementation plans. Ted agreed and stated that working strategically with tribal organizations, communities and stakeholders is important to determine how the TSPs can be incorporated into existing tribal programs and activities. What does implementation look like at the community level and in day-to-day activities? Does it include education and training? Is it based on regulations and regulatory needs? The TSC must consider the practicality of implementing the TSPs into tribal communities to help elders, children, school nurses and so forth.

Mike Durglo has discussed the TSPs with the President of the Intertribal Timber Council. This council has gone through a similar process and identified climate change as a priority. It would be helpful for the TSC to connect with other tribal groups that have been having similar discussions to determine their actions and the best path forward. Ted agreed that the TSC should collaborate with other groups to learn from each other and ask critical questions. He thanked Mike for sharing this information.

## Implementation of National TSPs

Ted said that he has had two conversations with Clay Bravo, chair of the National Tribal Caucus, who has solid ideas about convening a meeting of key science players from the tribes and EPA prior to the next National Tribal Caucus meeting in the fall. This meeting would ensure that everybody is “on the same page” and that tribal activities are aligned in the best manner to be productive. The TSC must move as efficiently and effectively as possible to make a difference in tribal communities.

Monica explained that, as was discussed at the face-to-face meeting, the Office of Research and Development (ORD) is restructuring its research programs. The climate change TSP falls under the new Air, Climate and Energy (ACE) Research Program. Other research programs focus on Safe and Sustainable Water Resources (SSWR), Sustainable and Healthy Communities, and one other. The TSC submitted task descriptions based on the TSPs to four of the research programs and had discussions with key personnel within the programs. She stated there was strong interest in the traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) TSP. Two of the task descriptions that were submitted focused on climate change and TEK, and another on TEK and a geospatial database that takes into consideration U.S. ecological systems. Ken Bailey described the task description that he submitted to the ACE and SSWR Research Programs based on the Tribal-Focused Exposure, Risk and Sustainability Tool (T-FERST) and climate change. Monica said that the TSP process was concurrent with the ORD research realignment, and ORD is receptive to hearing about the TSPs and determining where they may be integrated into the research programs. Monica appreciated the work that Joseph Schubauer-Berigan was performing with the SSWR Research Program. She promised to keep the members apprised of any developments as the research realignment and TSP integration moved forward.

Ted has had the privilege of being involved in the Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program. Approximately 1.5 years ago, Administrator Lisa Jackson began to develop a plan to foster the next generation of environmental scientists, particularly tribal environmental scientists who can implement science on tribal lands. EPA developed the Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program to help establish a framework to get tribal youth involved in science, which relates to the TEK TSP. The program will provide grants to tribal colleges and universities (TCUs), with the professors acting as the ambassadors performing environmental health projects that benefit their tribal communities. The projects are required to have a significant student component. The program received 12 proposals, and Ted and Felicia Wright served on the review team. Approximately seven of the proposals will be funded. Michelle DePass has asked the TSC to help craft curricula for the projects based on a number of issues (e.g., hydraulic fracturing, green building materials, air monitoring). Ted would like Katie’s help with the air monitoring proposal curriculum. Katie asked whether Ted could report about which TCUs were awarded, but he could not divulge the information at this time. Katie is working with Haskell Indian Nations University on air monitoring.

David LaRoche explained that the United States has been involved in the international climate negotiations, which focus on mitigation. The United States and a few other countries formed an informal group called the Adaptation Partnership, which will examine adaptation needs in vulnerable communities. A number of workshops will be developed among the various global regions. EPA and Canada have discussed holding a North American workshop sometime in 2012 about the climate change adaptation needs of tribal and indigenous communities. The group is in the process of narrowing the scope of the meeting. Funding is expected to come from the Commission for Environmental Cooperation. The preliminary workshop proposal is due next week.

Ted provided his initial thoughts about where the TSPs align with EPA programs. He suggested that an EPA Caucus member take the lead to work with him and Monica to pull together information about how the TSPs could be integrated into office and program activities. It is necessary to ensure that Agency

activities align with on-the-ground needs in Indian Country. Understanding these needs will be critical in the success of TSP implementation. Tia said that some tribal projects related to climate change already may exist within the regions, particularly Region 10. The TSC may be able to learn from such projects; Ted heartily agreed. The TSC should not “reinvent the wheel” in Indian Country. Monica said that it would be helpful to know what regional activities are underway prior to Jeff and Ted’s meeting in September. David thought that ITEP maintained a climate change website that documents many tribal activities in this area. Monica asked whether the Office of Air and Radiation would be the point of contact with ITEP. David explained that Darrel Harmon is the project officer for this grant, but David could be a point of contact as well. Monica would like Ted, David, Darrel, Allison Martin (ORD intern) and herself to meet about this issue later this week. Monica stressed that it is necessary to collaborate with regional partners to make the TSP implementation effort successful.

Tia asked whether the TSC still is updating the website. Monica said that the lead person in her office to assist with the communications strategy is on vacation. Information will be submitted to her as soon as possible so that the website can be informative and a model for content and style. Allison will be involved with the effort to update the website content. The newsletter now will include a regional spotlight to highlight tribal and Agency work within the regions; each issue will focus on one region. Monica would like to work with Jeff on updating the TEK description on the website so that it is satisfactory; Jeff agreed to look at it.

Monica reminded the Tribal Caucus members to place the TSPs on the agenda for their RTOC meetings. Region 10 requested an update about the TSC, and Kelly Wright will provide this report during the Region 10 RTOC meeting. None of the members had questions on their roles and responsibilities.

### **T-FERST Draft Prototype**

Monica reported that the T-FERST prototype link at <https://cfpub.epa.gov/tferst> is available to the members. The T-FERST developers would like feedback regarding the interface and the two guidebooks that Monica had provided to the members via e-mail. Members who are external to EPA are requested to use the guidebooks, which provide step-by-step guidance on how to use the tool. These comments will provide EPA with the tools to improve T-FERST; therefore, the feedback and comments are important, particularly tribal feedback. Monica has asked several former tribal representatives, ITEP members and Tribal Air Monitoring Support Center staff to comment to ensure that comments are received from key stakeholders.

Allison explained that her focus was data and information inventories within T-FERST. She will contact the TSC members via e-mail after the inventories are developed regarding their feedback to ensure that the tool is useful for the tribes. The e-mail will explain the types of feedback that are requested, particularly general comments about the usability of the tool and specific comments about the current inventory. Members are asked to identify gaps within the inventory. If the members have any questions, they should not hesitate to contact Allison via telephone or e-mail. John Mosley asked how to obtain access to T-FERST. Allison explained that EPA members use their Agency log-in and password and non-EPA members can use the guidebook to request access. Monica emphasized that the guidebooks explain the process, and if they are confusing, then the members should include this in their feedback. John asked whether water quality could be assessed through the tool. Ken explained that there are data layers regarding water quality samples but are not down to the sampling points at this time. Data sets have been provided, which is what Allison is compiling. Now that the tool has been released on the extranet, the goal is to obtain more data from the tribes and regions. John asked whether it interfaces with STORET data. Ken replied that this was going to be discussed on August 22, 2011; there also have been discussions about T-FERST interfacing with Esri software. An e-mail system currently is used to place

data into the database; latitudinal and longitudinal data can be added as well. Ken is available to answer any T-FERST questions via telephone and e-mail.

Monica stressed that Tribal Caucus input is needed to determine what data should be included in T-FERST. The goal is to include tribal input as the tool is developed. John was unsure whether a letter had been drafted to the regional caucuses regarding their input, and he thought that feedback from individual workgroups within the caucus would be beneficial. Tia explained that T-FERST would be presented at an upcoming Region 9 meeting. Allison will be the main point of contact for T-FERST feedback.

### **Announcements**

Monica noted that the 2011 Tribal Lands Forum (Tribal Lands and Environment: A National Forum on Solid Waste, Emergency Response, Contaminated Sites, and USTS) is being hosted by Jeff's tribe and will take place August 23–25, 2011, in Green Bay, Wisconsin. She looks forward to a report from the meeting especially how land issues align with the TSPs.

David Guest announced that he had just sent the slide show from the face-to-face meeting to the members via e-mail.

Monica will be on vacation from August 22, 2011, until September 6, 2011.

Monica and Ted thanked the members for participating and adjourned the conference call at 3:10 p.m.

### **Action Items**

- ✧ Ted will plan a time in September when he can visit with Jeff in Wisconsin to plan the next steps for TSP implementation.
- ✧ Monica will plan a meeting this week with Ted, David, Darrel, Allison and herself regarding existing activities about which ITEP may have knowledge.
- ✧ Monica will work with Jeff on updating the TEK description on the website.

**NATIONAL EPA-TRIBAL SCIENCE COUNCIL  
CONFERENCE CALL  
AUGUST 15, 2011  
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM EASTERN STANDARD TIME**

Call-in Number: **866-299-3188**  
Access Code: **2025648322#**

**DRAFT AGENDA**

- 2:00 – 2:05 Roll Call/Introduction of new representatives
- 2:05 – 2:10 June business meeting and July minutes distributed for review and finalized
- 2:10 – 2:20 Tribal Caucus reports
  - RTOC meeting updates (Jeff Mears)
- 2:20 – 2:40 Implementation of National Tribal Science Priorities
  - Office of Research & Development
  - Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program
  - Discussion to identify where priorities align with other EPA programs
  - Practical application of addressing priorities in Tribal communities
- 2:40 – 3:00 Announcement(s)
  - 2011 Tribal Lands Forum
    - Tribal Lands and Environment: A National Forum on Solid Waste, Emergency Response, Contaminated Sites, and USTS
    - August 23-25, 2011 in Green Bay, WI
  - [http://www4.nau.edu/itep/waste/twrap\\_tlfl1.asp](http://www4.nau.edu/itep/waste/twrap_tlfl1.asp)

Next conference call – **September 19<sup>th</sup>** 2:00 – 3:00 pm EDT